

O F F I C I A L U S E O N L Y

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY ICE		TECS ACCESS CODE 3	
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TITLE: OPERATION DENIAL		CASE NUMBER SB13HS15GC0004 OCDETF NO: WC-ND -00077	
CASE STATUS: INTERIM RPT			
REPORT DATE 072215	DATE ASSIGNED 062415	PROGRAM CODE YL0	REPORT NO. 002
RELATED CASE NUMBERS:			
COLLATERAL REQ:			
TYPE OF REPORT: INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS			
TOPIC: INTERVIEW OF MARIA ELENA CERON ESCOBAR			

SYNOPSIS:

In January 2015, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agents assigned to the Grand Forks Narcotics Task Force (GFNTF) opened a joint case with local law enforcement agencies regarding a recent outbreak of drug overdoses resulting in the death of a young adult in the Grand Forks, ND area. Background information suggests that Ryan JENSEN, Brandon HUBBARD, and others are responsible for distributing fentanyl and heroin which resulted in the drug overdoses in ND and elsewhere. Information also suggests that the fentanyl originated in China and was mailed into the United States from Canada. The investigation is ongoing to disrupt and dismantle the organization responsible for importing and distributing fentanyl which resulted in death in the District of North Dakota.

This ROI details the interview of Maria Elena CERON ESCOBAR at the El Dorado International Airport by HSI Bogota Agents.

DISTRIBUTION: CASB RACGC SACMS	SIGNATURE: _____ VARGAS JAIRO R SPECIAL AGENT	
	APPROVED: _____ MCCLAIN CHARLES ICE ASST ATTACHE	
	ORIGIN OFFICE: SB BOGOTA - ATTACHE	TELEPHONE: 011 383 2643 TYPIST: VARGAS

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EXHIBIT

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CASE PROGRAM CODES:

YL0 DRUG SMUGGLING	G2C OR HIDTA Financial S	2BH DIGITAL CURRENCY
2BI ONLINE BLACK MARKETS	3GS HSI NTC ASSIST	211 HIDTA PROGRAM
210 OCDETF	7I2 NTC CARGO UNIT	1R6 CYBER CRIME UNIT

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DETAILS OF INVESTIGATION

This ROI details the interview of Maria Elena CERON ESCOBAR at the El Dorado International Airport by HSI Bogota Agents.

On July 15, 2015, HSI Attache Bogota assisted HSI Fargo based on a collateral request. HSI Fargo requested agents in Bogota, Colombia interview the mother of Daniel VIVAS CERON, who had just been arrested in Panama City, Panama based on an outstanding federal arrest warrant. HSI Bogota was advised that the mother, Maria Elena CERON ESCOBAR, was waiting for VIVAS CERON's arrival at the El Dorado International Airport. HSI Fargo agents also advised HSI Special Agent Steven Munson that CERON ESCOBAR may be involved in the narcotics scheme for which VIVAS CERON was charged.

At approximately 5:25 p.m., HSI Special Agents Munson and Ubaldo D Rios arrived at the airport in order to locate and make contact with CERON ESCOBAR. Agents were provided a photograph to assist in identifying her.

At approximately 5:35 p.m., agents located CERON ESCOBAR near the exit area for international arriving passengers. Agents walked over and SA Rios called CERON ESCOBAR by her first name, "MARIA," to which she responded by turning around and stating "Si." SA Rios then identified himself and explained to CERON ESCOBAR that the agents wanted to talk to her about her son. The agents also informed CERON ESCOBAR that her son had been arrested in Panama City, Panama, upon his arrival. CERON ESCOBAR acknowledged that she understood who the agents were and asked why her son, VIVAS CERON, had been arrested since he had just gotten out of prison in Canada after serving a twelve years sentence. SA Rios informed her that he was not familiar with the charges or when the arrest warrant had been issued. CERON ESCOBAR seemed to be confused and stated she could not understand how her son could be in trouble or commit a crime while being in prison. SA Munson asked CERON ESCOBAR if she would like to move away from the public area and discuss the case somewhere else, such as a coffee shop that was upstairs, and she agreed.

CERON ESCOBAR voluntarily followed both SA Munson and SA Rios to a coffee shop in the upper level of the airport. SA Munson asked CERON ESCOBAR if she spoke English and she stated, "Si." Once there, SA Munson purchased CERON ESCOBAR a coffee and then, along with SA Rios, the interview began. CERON ESCOBAR stated that she did missionary work and worked at a Pentecostal Church in Canada and a Korean Missionary in Dominican Republic for two years. She stated she is currently living in Venezuela with her husband, prior to that they lived for thirty years in Montreal, Canada. She recently arrived to Bogota, Colombia several days ago in order to welcome VIVAS CERON; who was being deported from Canada to Colombia.

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